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TAPOL REPORT

Current developments in East Timor 19.06.89

Although it is difficult to get confirmation from both the Vatican and Japanese embassy in Jakarta, it is clear that six East Timorese have sought asylum in the embassy grounds. Around 9.40 am Jakarta time today, Carlos da Silva Lopes and Fernando de Araujo entered the Japanese embassy while four others Joao dos Reis, Avelino Coelho da Silva, Agapito Cardosa and Marciano Garcia da Silva entered the Vatican Embassy. Earlier reports mentioned five East Timorese who entered the Vatican Embassy but unconfirmed reports from Jakarta mention that Lucas da Costa (who fled from Dili, via Den Pasar to Jakarta) was arrested on Thursday 15.06.89. Several phone calls have been made to both embassies in an attempt to get the facts confirmed but both embassies remain vague and are neither denying nor confirming. Japanese Press attache Antatsue (?) confirmed earlier that two Timorese remain in the lobby, unprotected, and can be abducted by the Indonesian authorities.

Both founder members of PET (Parliamentarians for East Timor) have written to the Japanese authorities asking the protection of the asylum seekers. In other countries similar efforts are being made.

Earlier Human Rights Advocate Haji Princen has asked for clarification to Pangab (Commander-in-Chief) General Try Sutrisno of the recent mass arrests and torture of Timorese in Dili and Baucau. In his letter to the commander, Princen claims hundreds of arrests have been taking place and even executions have been carried out. They were arrested because of alleged support to the letter Bishop Belo send to the UN. If true, Princen insists, the commander should make an investigation of those responsible for the arrests. According to H.C.J. Princen there are now two categories of prisoners, Fretilin supporters and the other category supporters of the Belo letter. He stated that the East Timorese should be treated as other Indonesians, meaning the KUHAP (code of procedure) should also be applied to them - arrest with a warrant, family should be informed, no torture and limited duration of arrest.

Other sources in Jakarta claim that the Indonesian authorities started arresting Timorese community leaders from 21 April onwards, on suspicion of having signed a statement to support the Belo letter to Perez de Cuellar.

They are all detained in the Korem (Military District HQ)of Dili. Among those arrested are Marcelino and Victor da Costa originally from Los Palos and arrested in Dili on 3 and 8 May. Also Zito Pereira, arrested in Dili on 28 May. On 30 May the military arrested 4 persons in Dili: Nuno Corvelho Sarmento, Francisco Lela, Jose Evaristo and Macario Faria. The same sources claim that executions took place in the Baucau district. The arrests and executions created an atmosphere of fear and terror and several decided to flee to Den Pasar and Jakarta.

TAPOL, the Indonesia human rights campaign.
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a statement to support the Belo letter to Perez de Cuellar.

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Late reports from Dili state that ... 10 [illegible] strong, were assembled to demonstrate against Bishop Belo. This demo was led by Abilio and Francisco Osorio Soares. Quite spontaneously the population of Dili started to pour from all directions armed with sticks and swords to face the Apodeti people. Quite unexpectedly, Mgr. Belo appeared and appealed to the thousands of East Timorese to pray together. This holy day was also used by the Bishop to reiterate the contents of his letter to the UN and confirm the right to self-determination to be carried out in a voluntary way without the repression and human rights violations of the last 13 years. After this explanation the people of Dili started to cheer, clapping their hands and jumping for joy. As a countermeasure the military started making arrests.

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